

NIJ FY 2026 Invited to Apply - Novel Psychoactive Substance Discovery, Education, and Reporting Institute

Grants.gov Funding Opportunity Number: O-NIJ-2026-172784

Application Deadlines in Eastern Time (ET):

1. Complete SF-424 and submit in Grants.gov: **October 7, 2026, by 11:59 p.m. ET**
 2. Submit full application in JustGrants: **October 13, 2026, by 8:59 p.m. ET**
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1. BASIC INFORMATION

Purpose of the Funding

The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) is committed to advancing work that furthers the U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ) mission to keep our country safe and secure and uphold the rule of law and protect the rights of American citizens. OJP provides federal leadership, funding, and other critical resources to directly support law enforcement, combat violent crime, protect American children, provide services to American crime victims, and address public safety challenges, including human trafficking and the opioid crisis.

This is a notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) for the NIJ FY 2026 Invited to Apply - Novel Psychoactive Substance Discovery, Education, and Reporting Institute. This opportunity seeks to enhance operations of a Novel Psychoactive Substance Discovery, Education, and Reporting Institute (NPS Discovery) to rapidly identify and report newly emerging opioids, stimulants, and other drugs which may cause intoxication, impairment, or other adverse effects.

See the [Eligible Applicants](#) section for eligibility details.

Funding Details

Announcement Type	Initial
Assistance Listing Number	16.560
Statutory Authority	Pub. L. No. 119-74, 140 Stat 5, 32-33; 28 USC 530C.
Grants.gov Opportunity Number	O-NIJ-2026-172784
Expected Total Amount of Funding	\$1,000,000
Anticipated Number of Awards	1
Award Type(s)	Cooperative Agreement
Anticipated Award Amount	Up to \$1,000,000
Expected Award Period(s)	36 months starting on January 1, 2027

Key Dates and Times

NOFO Release Date	September 30, 2026
SAM.gov Registration/Renewal	Begin the process as soon as possible
Step 1: Grants.gov Deadline	11:59 p.m. ET on October 7, 2026
Step 2: JustGrants Deadline	8:59 p.m. ET on October 13, 2026

See [Questions?](#) at the end of this NOFO for agency contact information.

2. ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Applicants

The types of entities that are eligible to apply are:

Other: Only the applicant that received an official invitation letter from NIJ is able and eligible to apply. Please refer to that letter for eligibility requirements. The application will only be accepted from the following:

- The Frederic Rieders Family Renaissance Foundation

Cost Sharing (Match) Requirement: Match is not required but see details regarding “Cofunding” here [Guidance for Applicants and Awardees](#).

3. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Statutory Authority

Pub. L. No. 119-74, 140 Stat 5, 32-33; 28 USC 530C.

Agency Funding Priorities

In order to advance public safety and help meet its mission, NIJ priorities include:

- Directly supporting law enforcement operations (including immigration law enforcement operations);
- Combatting violent crime;
- Supporting services to American citizens;
- Protecting American children; and
- Supporting American victims of trafficking and sexual assault.

Unallowable Activities: The following are certain unallowable costs and certain activities that are out of the program scope and will not be funded.

1. Out of program scope is any program or activity, at any tier that, directly or indirectly, violates (or promotes or facilitates the violation of) federal immigration law (including 8 U.S.C. § 1373) or impedes or hinders the enforcement of federal immigration law—including by failing to comply with 8 U.S.C. § 1373, give access to DHS agents, or honor DHS requests and provide requested notice to DHS agents.
2. Out of program scope is any program or activity, at any tier that violates any applicable Federal civil rights or nondiscrimination law. This includes violations that— (1) indirectly violate the law, including by promoting or facilitating violations; or (2) unlawfully favor individuals in any race or protected group, including on a majority or minority, or privileged or unprivileged, basis, within a given area, population, or sector.
3. As specified in the [DOJ Grants Financial Guide](#), in Chapter 3.13 “Unallowable Costs” (“Legal Services for Aliens”), any obligations of funds, at any tier, under this award to provide (or to support the provision of) legal services to any removable alien or any alien otherwise unlawfully present in the United States shall be unallowable costs for purposes any award made under this notice, but the foregoing shall not be understood to apply: (1) to legal services to obtain protection orders for victims of crime; or (2) to immigration-related legal services that may be expressly authorized or required by any law, or any judicial ruling, governing or applicable to the award.

Goals and Objectives of This Funding Opportunity

Goal 1: Open-Access Drug Early Warning System: Establish and facilitate the operation of an open-access drug early warning system to develop content on newly emerging drugs, trends, and impacts.

- **Objective 1: Surveillance:** Development of a continuously updated testing panel using an expansive library database to include new drugs available from standard reference material manufacturers to create the most accurate and comprehensive scope.
- **Objective 2: Monitoring:** Using prospective sample-mining and retrospective data-mining approaches, conduct extensive testing of authentic forensic, clinical, and related sample types to detect and discover the newest drugs present within relevant populations, as well as determine the most prevalent drugs requiring further research and development.
- **Objective 3: Research:** Characterization of metabolic pathways associated with new, prevalent NPS to identify the most appropriate biomarkers to assist with future testing, and to determine if generated metabolites could contribute to effects or toxicity. Investigate, with collaborative partners, the pharmacology of NPS and conduct additional research assessments.

- **Objective 4: Confirmation:** Development and employment of additional confirmatory methods to determine the identity of new NPS discovered for data-sharing with partners.

Goal 2: Analytical Resources: Development of analytical resources to assist laboratories with operations regarding complex and comprehensive testing for NPS.

- **Objective 1: New Methodologies:** Rapid development and validation of confirmatory testing methods for NPS in toxicology samples and drug materials using appropriate analytical platforms to establish reference concentration data with a specific focus on developing methods transferable to forensic partners.
- **Objective 2: Testing Scope Recommendations:** Development of test scope recommendations for laboratories to prioritize most prevalent NPS. Facilitate expert-review and community buy-in related to output.
- **Objective 3: Reports, Toolkits, and Datasheets:** Consolidation of research outcomes to generate a comprehensive document (“toolkit”) or short reference guide (“datasheet”) detailing relevant information regarding the detection of NPS, including drug information, demographics, date of first appearance, prevalence, temporal and geographic trends, combinations with other NPS or drugs of abuse, metabolism, methods for confirmations, and/or reference concentrations.

Goal 3: Forensically Relevant Drug Database: Facilitation of a drug database containing forensically relevant drugs to be the go-to resource for information regarding NPS.

- **Objective 1: Curating Common References:** Development of a primary resource for the consolidation of information and peer-reviewed publications regarding NPS and other drugs.
- **Objective 2: Standardization of Reporting:** Improvement of standardized reporting formats, including the standardization of drug nomenclature and taxonomy.
- **Objective 3: Data Repository:** Creation of a user interface to allow collaborators and users of the database to input information of drug identifications in their jurisdictions.

Goal 4: Education & Knowledge Transfer: Deliverables from this research will be immediately disseminated to forensic science and criminal justice stakeholders via email and through websites. Presentations at in-person and virtual forensic science conferences, as well as peer-reviewed publication of key findings in appropriate forensic science journals with a focus on open-access options, are included in the dissemination plan.

- **Objective 1: Reports / Publications:** Development of peer-reviewed and non-peer-reviewed reports and publications for dissemination of results.
- **Objective 2: Webinars:** Facilitation of educational content to train forensic scientists and other key stakeholders about new information regarding NPS.

- **Objective 3: Listserv:** Creation of a listserv to connect collaborators and stakeholders to share new information, resources, and ideas regarding NPS.

For a description of how awards under this NOFO will contribute to achieving these goals and objectives, see the [Performance Reports](#) section below.

Expected Outcomes

NIJ expects recipients to submit deliverables and performance reports, as described below. Read the [Application Resource Guide](#) for more information. NIJ will measure success by reviewing a recipient's submission of performance reports and data and the extent to which project implementation reflects progress toward the goals and objectives of this NOFO.

Deliverables

Recipients will be expected to deliver the following:

- **Scholarly Products** as described at [Post-Award Requirements for Research, Development, and Evaluation Grants](#) should be disseminated throughout the period of performance to the extent possible. Development and delivery of interim products should be built into the Project Timeline. Author-accepted manuscripts for peer-reviewed publications derived from research funded by the award should be deposited in a publication repository designated by NIJ. A final research paper is required.
- **Research Dissemination Products** should translate the research into actionable information for policymakers and practitioners to promote change in the field. Grantees should devote equal effort to development of these products as they do to do scholarly products.
- **Data Sets and Associated Files and Documentation** resulting in whole or in part from their funded research must be archived to ensure the preservation, availability, and transparency of data collected. For more information on this requirement, please review the information found here: [Data Archiving](#).

Performance Reports

OJP requires recipients to submit regular performance reports that communicate progress toward achieving [Program Goals and Objectives](#). Read information on [performance reporting](#). For NIJ's post award reporting requirements please review [Post-Award Requirements for Research, Development, and Evaluation Grants](#).

A list of performance measure questions for this funding opportunity can be found at [Performance Measures for Award Recipients](#).

Substantial Involvement of Federal Agency: OJP expects to make some or all awards under this NOFO as cooperative agreements, which allows OJP to have

substantial involvement in carrying out the project. Read the [Application Resource Guide](#) for a discussion of this involvement and related award conditions.

4. APPLICATION CONTENTS AND FORMAT

Application Contents List

The table below lists the contents of your application. Refer to the [DOJ Grant Application Submission Checklist](#) for application instructions.

Application Item	Submission Type
Step 1: Grants.gov	
Application for Federal Assistance: SF-424	Online Form
Step 2: JustGrants	
Standard Applicant Information	Online Form
Proposal Abstract	Text Box
Data Requested With Application - Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (including Applicant Disclosure of High-Risk Status) - Agency Funding Priorities Inventory - Principal Investigator Contact Information	Online Form
Proposal Narrative	Attachment
Budget	Online Form
Other Budget/Financial Attachments - Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable) - Consultant Rate (if applicable) - Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation for Awards Over \$250,000; Waiver (if applicable) - Disclosure of Process Related to Executive Compensation (if applicable)	Attachment

<u>Additional Application Components</u>	Attachments
• Gold Standard Science • Biographical Sketches *Required* • Current and Pending (Other) Support Common Forms *Required* • Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable) • Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity Statement • Letters of Support (if applicable) • Bibliography/References • Tools/Instruments, Questionnaires, Tables/Charts/Graphs, or Maps • List of Individuals in the Application • Human Subjects Protection • Privacy Certificate • Request to Use Incentives or Stipends • Project Management Plan and Timeline • Consortium/Contractual Agreements • Data Management, Sharing, and Archiving Plan (DMSAP)	

Standard Applicant Information

Review and edit as needed the information imported from the SF-424 submitted in Grants.gov. Add ZIP codes for areas affected by the project.

Proposal Abstract

In JustGrants, enter a proposal abstract (limited to 2,000 characters) summarizing the proposed project. As abstracts for funded projects are public, do not include any personally identifying information (e.g., staff names). The abstract should include the following information:

- The name of the applicant's proposed project.
- The purpose of the proposed project (i.e., what the project will do and why it is necessary).
- Where the project will take place (i.e., the service area, if applicable).
- Who will be served by the project (i.e., who will be helped or have their needs addressed by the project).
- What activities will be carried out to complete the project.
- The subrecipient(s)/partner organizations or entities, if known.
- Deliverables and expected outcomes (i.e., what the project will achieve).

View an example of a [proposal abstract](#).

Data Requested With Application

Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (including Applicant Disclosure of High-Risk Status)

Review information on this [questionnaire](#).

Agency Funding Priorities Inventory

Applicants seeking priority consideration under the [Agency Funding Priorities](#) section should answer the inventory questions in their entirety in the web-based form in JustGrants.

Principal Investigator Contact Information

To facilitate administrative processes associated with application review and post review activities, applicants are requested to enter the name of the Principal Investigator for the application project, as well as their contact information.

Proposal Narrative

Format of the Proposal Narrative

Submit the narrative as an attachment in JustGrants. The document should:

- Be double-spaced, using a standard 12-point size font
- Have no less than 1-inch margins
- Have numbered pages
- Not exceed 20 pages.

Sections of the Proposal Narrative

The Proposal Narrative should include the sections listed below. If you want priority consideration, the Proposal Narrative must state which [priority\(ies\)](#) your project will advance and describe how it will do so.

1. Title Page (not counted against the proposal narrative page limit): The title page should include:

- Project Title
- Submission date.
- Funding opportunity number.
- Principal Investigator (and any co-principal investigators).
- Unique author identifier (e.g., ORCID, Researcher ID, Scopus Author ID), if available.
- Requests for consideration under “agency funding priorities”.
- Key words, including science focus areas.

2. Table of Contents and Figures (not counted against the proposal narrative page limit).

- 3. Statement of the Problem:** The applicant should clearly articulate the research problem, its significance to the criminal justice field, and demonstrate a thorough understanding of existing knowledge gaps. The statement should establish why this research is needed now and how it addresses a critical issue.
- 4. Project Design and Implementation:** The strength of how the applicant will implement activities, including the soundness of the project design and how the activities align to the stated goals and objectives. The proposal should present a rigorous research methodology, realistic timeline, and clear connection between proposed activities and expected outcomes.
- 5. Capabilities and Competencies:** The applicant's administrative and scientific technical capacity to successfully complete the project. The proposal should demonstrate the research team's relevant expertise, institutional resources, and track record of completing similar projects successfully.
- 6. Potential Impact:** The applicant should describe how the research findings will provide actionable knowledge to criminal justice practitioners and policymakers. The proposal should articulate clear dissemination strategies and explain how the research will advance the field or inform practice and policy.
- 7. Appendices (not counted against the proposal narrative page limit) include:**
 - If the application (including the budget) identifies any proposed noncompetitive agreements that are or may be considered procurement "contracts" (rather than subawards), for purposes of federal grants administrative requirements, the applicant also must list the entities with which the applicant proposes to contract.
 - List of other agencies, organizations, or funding sources to which this application has been submitted (if applicable).
 - Any table/charts/graphs supporting the program narrative.

Budget and Associated Documentation

Budget

Use the Budget Detail Worksheet (Web-Based Form) to submit the budget. Read information on [budget preparation](#) and [JustGrants Application Submission Training](#).

Completeness and cost effectiveness. The budget should be detailed, reasonable, and clearly justified, with all costs directly supporting the proposed research activities and demonstrating efficient use of federal funds.

- List each cost needed to implement the project under the appropriate cost category.
- Clearly name and describe each cost.
- Show the computation of each cost (e.g., cost per unit, number of units, and total cost).
- Enter narrative, as needed, to explain the cost calculations and connection to your project goals, objectives, and activities.

- Include only costs that are reasonable, allocable, and necessary to implement the project. They must be allowable under the funding statute and agency requirements.¹

Budget/Financial Attachments

- **Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable):** If the budget includes indirect costs calculated using a current, federally approved indirect cost rate, upload your indirect cost rate agreement. Read information about [indirect costs](#).
- **Consultant Rate (if applicable):** Read information on [limits to consultant rates](#) and whether you need to request approval to exceed those limits.
- **Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation for Awards Over \$250,000; Waiver (if applicable):** Read information on this [limitation](#) and to determine whether you need to submit a waiver request.
- **Disclosure of Process Related to Executive Compensation (if applicable):** Applicants to this funding opportunity are not required to provide this disclosure.

Additional Application Components

Applications to NIJ NOFOs are expected to include additional research-related components (as applicable), attached in JustGrants. One of these is a required application component:

- **Biographical Sketch Forms **Required** and Current and Pending (Other) Support Common Forms **Required**:** All applicants to NIJ NOFOs are required to submit the *Biographical Sketch* common form and the *Current and Pending (Other) Support* common form (see details of the required data elements here: [NSPM-33 Implementation Guidance](#)) for all key personnel involved in the research i.e., Principal and Co-Principal Investigators, Project Directors, and any individual who contributes in a substantive way to the scientific development or execution of the project proposed or is defined as such in the NOFO. In addition to ensuring transparency, these forms help reviewers assess the qualifications, expertise, and capacity of researchers to complete the proposed work. NIJ encourages the use of SciENCv (with no preference as to available formats) to populate both forms (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sciencv/>).

A description of the other application components is found here [Guidance for Applicants and Awardees | National Institute of Justice](#).

Disclosures and Assurances

Read the [disclosures and assurances](#) and complete them in JustGrants:

- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

¹ See [2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart E](#) and the [DOJ Grants Financial Guide](#). Read information on [unallowable costs](#) that apply to all funding opportunities.

- Disclosure of Duplication in Cost Items (if applicable)
- DOJ Certified Standard Assurances
- DOJ Certifications
- Applicant Disclosure and Justification – DOJ High-Risk Grantees (if applicable)

5. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES

The [DOJ Grant Application Submission Checklist](#) provides instructions for how to submit your application by the [deadlines](#). [Executive Order \(E.O.\) 12372](#) (Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs) does not apply to this funding opportunity: read the [Application Resource Guide](#) for details. Read OJP's policy for applicants to [request late submission](#) due to technical difficulties, severe weather, or natural or manmade disasters.

6. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

OJP will review applications to ensure the information presented is reasonable, understandable, measurable, achievable, and consistent with the goals of the funding opportunity. In addition, OJP reviews invited applications for consistency with the invitation letter and invited applicant guidance. See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for information on the application review process, including risk review, and the deciding official.

7. AWARD NOTICES

Read about the [award notification](#) process.

8. POST-AWARD REQUIREMENTS & ADMINISTRATION

Read the [Application Resource Guide](#) for more information about: standard award terms and conditions, administrative and national policy requirements, and post-award reporting requirements.

9. QUESTIONS?

NOFO Contact	Name: Frances Scott Phone: (202) 598-5746 Email: Frances.Scott@usdoj.gov Hours: 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. ET, Monday–Friday
SAM.gov Help Desk	Website: sam.gov/help Hours: 8 a.m.–8 p.m. ET, Monday–Friday (closed federal holidays)

Grants.gov Help Desk	Phone: 800-518-4726 Email: support@grants.gov Website: grants.gov/support Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (closed federal holidays)
JustGrants Help Desk	Phone: 833-872-5175 Email: JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov Hours: 7:00 a.m.–9:00 p.m. ET, Monday–Friday and 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. ET on Saturday, Sunday, and federal holidays.